

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 07229 221756Z

56

ACTION STR-02

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GENEVA ONLY FOR WALKER

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TAGS: EEC, MTN, ETRD

SUBJECT: MTN MINISTERIAL IN MARCH

REF: A) EC BRUSSELS 7018, B) STATE 174352

1. AS PROMISED REFTTEL A, SOAMES CALLED DCM IN ON JULY 22 AND GAVE HIM CONSIDERED COMMISSION VIEWS ON MARCH MTN MINISTERIAL, AS FOLLOWS:

A) COMMISSION AGREES TO EARLY MARCH DATE. SOAMES ALSO CONFIRMED THAT BY "MINISTERIAL" HE MEANS COMMISSION WOULD BE REPRESENTED BY COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, NOT HIJZEN. COMMISSION WOULD RAISE PROPOSAL AT NEXT MEETING OF ARTICLE 113 COMMITTEE (SCHEDULED FOR EARLY SEPTEMBER) AND ASSUMES MEMBER STATES WILL EVENTUALLY AGREE TO MEETING.

B) BECAUSE ARTICLE 113 COMMITTEE MUST, UNDER TREATY, BE CONSULTED SOAMES COULD NOT AT THIS TIME AGREE TO JOINT APPROACH TO LONG AS PROPOSED REF ?. HOWEVER, ASSUMING 113 COMMITTEE VIEW IN EARLY SEPTEMBER IS POSITIVE, COMMISSION WOULD THEN JOIN US IN MAKING PROPOSAL FOR MARCH MINISTERIAL TO LONG AT THAT TIME.

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PAGE 02 EC BRU 07229 221756Z

C) WHILE HE SEES DANGERS IN BOTH MARCH MINISTERIAL AND FALL

TNC THAT LDC'S WOULD TAKE EITHER OPPORTUNITY TO PUSH DEMANDS THAT WE BOTH WOULD FIND DIFFICULT TO HANDLE, SOAMES BELIEVES IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT TAKE OVERT ACTION NOW ON MINISTERIAL PROPOSAL THAT WOULD GIVE OTHERS PRETEXT TO CHARGE THAT WE ARE SEEKING TO SIDETRACK OR OTHERWISE DELAY NORMAL PROCESSES OF MTN. HE FEELS SUGGESTED APPROACH TO LONG BEFORE SUMMER BREAK COULD PRODUCT SUCH AS EXCUSE AND THEREFORE HE WOULD REJECT IT EVEN IF HE DID NOT HAVE 113 PROBLEM NOTED ABOVE.

2. AS REGARDS ARGUMENT IN REF B THAT WE HAD AGREED IN JANUARY TALKS THAT SIX MONTHS NOTICE WAS NEEDED FOR PRODUCTIVE MINISTERIAL, SOAMES SAID HE DID NOT RECALL SUCH AGREEMENT BUT HAD DISCUSSED QUESTION WITH GUNDELACH ANYWAY. LATTER SAID HE HAD MAKE SUCH STATEMENT BUT MEANT IT TO APPLY TO SITUATION WHICH MIGHT BE CONTEMPLATED TOWARD END OF NEGOTIATIONS WHEN FINAL DECISIONS WOULD BE NECESSARY AND, THUS, WOULD NEED TO BE FULLY PREPARED. SINCE NIETHER SOAMES NOR GUNDELACH THOUGHT THAT MARCH MEETING WOULD BE OCCASION FOR FINAL DECISIONS, NEED FOR LONG LEAD-TIME ENVISAGED IN JANUARY TALKS WAS LESS PRESSING.

3. RE POSSIBLE TNC MEETING IN FALL, SOAMES SAID COMMISSION VIEW WAS CURRENTLY NEUTRAL. IF SEVERAL COUNTRIES WANTED IT, COMMISSION WOULD CERTAINLY NOT OPPOSE, EVEN IF IT WERE DOUBTFUL THAT MUCH COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED. IN ANY CASE, DESPITE DANGERS WHICH DCM REMINDED HIM HE HAD HIMSELF CITED ABOVE, SOAMES SAID COMMISSION, AS OF NOW, WOULD NOT OPPOSE TNC MEETING FOR LATER THIS YEAR.

4. COMMETN: THOUGH SOAMES IS NOT DISPOSED TO EARLY APPROACH TO LONG, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT EC WILL PROBABLY AGREE TO MARCH MEETING SOMETIME IN EARLY FALL. GENEVA IS IN BEST POSITION TO ASSESS STRENGTH OF PRESSURE FOR TNC MEETING IN FALL, BUT IT APPEARS LIKELY FROM HERE THAT COMMISSION IS MORE WILLING TO RUN RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HOLDING SUCH MEETING RATHER THAN SHARE (AND CERTAINLY BEAR) ANY ONUS THAT MIGHT BE ATTACHED TO EFFORT WHICH MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS SLOWING DOWN MTN PROGRESS. DCM EMPHASIZED THAT, WHILE OUR ASSESSMENTS OF DANGERS MAY DIFFER, HE HOPED WE COULD KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH ON HOW WE PLAYED REACTION TO SUCH PRESSURES IN ORDER TO AVOID REPEAT OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHICH AROSE OVER QUESTION OF SUMMER GROUP LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AGRICULTURE MEETING. SOAMES AGREED THIS WAS HIGHLY DESIRABLE. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY COMMISSION CAN BE PERSUADED TO RECONSIDER AN APPROACH TO LONG BEFORE SEPTEMBER AND 113 COMMITTEE SESSION. HINTON

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